

means for assembling two eyelets in flange-to-flange relationship with respect to one another to define at least one raceway having a single recirculating rotational path passing through aligned portions of the crossover passage formed by the flange-to-flange relationship of the two eyelets for receiving the plurality of ball bearings.

28. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 further comprising:
means for over molding the assembled eyelets to provide a unitary ball nut.

29. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 wherein the eyelets are identical to one another.

30. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 wherein the means for forming further comprises:
means for drawing an eyelet; and
means for coining the helix passage and crossover passage in the flange end of the eyelet.

31. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 wherein the means for assembling further comprises:
means for temporarily holding the two eyelets with respect to one another with a lock member.

32. (New) The ball nut of claim 31 wherein the means for forming further comprises:
means for forming at least one tab on the flange end of the eyelet to define the lock member.

33. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 wherein the means for assembling further comprises:

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means for inserting the plurality of ball bearings within the helix passage and the crossover passage.

34. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 further comprising:
means for providing a punch in the helix passage to direct ball bearings into the crossover passage.

35. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 wherein the eyelet is formed of a metal material selected from a group including steel, hardened steel, melonited steel, heat treated steel, stainless steel, spherodized stainless steel, annealed stainless steel, and heat treated stainless steel.

36. (New) The ball nut of claim 27 further comprising:
means for hardening the eyelet to approximately R_c 62.

37. (New) In a ball nut having at least one internal bearing race with a first end and a second end, and a crossover passage for connecting the first end and the second end to form a continuous recirculating path for a plurality of ball bearings, the improvement comprising:

at least two eyelets, each eyelet having a portion of a helix passage for receiving a plurality of ball bearings formed in a face of a flange end and a portion of a crossover passage formed in the face of the flange end, the crossover passage in communication with the helix passage for returning the plurality of ball bearings, the two eyelets operably engageable in face-to-face, flange-to-flange relationship with respect to one another to define one raceway having a single recirculating rotational path passing through aligned portions of the crossover passage formed by the face-to-face, flange-to-flange relationship of the two eyelets for receiving the plurality of ball bearings.

38. (New) In a ball nut having at least one internal bearing race with a first end and a second end, and a crossover passage for connecting the first end and

the second end to form a continuous recirculating path for a plurality of ball bearings, the improvement comprising:

a ball nut body with at least one helix passage for receiving a plurality of ball bearings, a crossover passage formed to define an individual raceway for each helix passage, each raceway having a separate, single orbit, recirculating rotational path.

39. (New) The ball nut of claim 38 further comprising:

the ball nut body having an elongate, generally cylindrical-shaped, metal injection-molded body.

40. (New) The ball nut of claim 38 further comprising:

means for forming a helical portion of each recirculating path to extend less than an entire circumference of an interior of the ball nut body from a first end to a second end; and

means for forming a crossover passage portion of each recirculating path to extend in communication between the first and the second end of the corresponding helical portion.

41. (New) The ball nut of claim 40 further comprising:

means for angularly offsetting each crossover passage portion with respect to a longitudinally adjacent crossover passage portion.

42. (New) The ball nut of claim 38 further comprising:

a helical portion of each recirculating path formed to extend less than an entire circumference of an interior of the ball nut body from a first end to a second end; and

a crossover passage portion of each recirculating path to extend formed in communication between the first and the second end of the corresponding helical portion.

43. (New) The ball nut of claim 42 further comprising:
each crossover passage portion angularly offset with respect to a
longitudinally adjacent crossover passage portion.

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44. (New) A ball nut having at least one internal bearing race with a
first end and a second end, and at least one recirculating crossover passage for
connecting the first end with the second end to form a continuous recirculating path
for a plurality of ball bearings, comprising:

means for stamping a first part with a first portion of a groove and a
first portion of a crossover passage in a first face of a first flange region from a flat
metal strip for receiving a plurality of ball bearings;

means for stamping a second part with a second portion of the groove
and a second portion of the crossover passage in a second face of a second flange
region in the flat metal strip, the second portions of the groove and crossover passage
of the second part operably positionable in communication with the first portions of
the groove and crossover passage of the first part for returning the plurality of ball
bearings from one end of the groove to an opposite end; and

means for assembling the first and second stamped parts in face-to-face,
flange-to-flange relationship with respect to one another to define a ball nut with a
continuous recirculating path for a plurality of ball bearings.

45. (New) The ball nut of claim 44 wherein the first and second
stamped parts are identical to one another.

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46. (New) The ball nut of claim 44 further comprising:
means for hardening the first and second stamped parts after stamping.

47. (New) In a ball nut having at least one internal bearing race with a
first end and a second end, and a crossover passage for connecting the first end and
the second end to form a continuous recirculating path for a plurality of ball bearings,
the improvement comprising:

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a first stamped part having a first portion of a groove and a first portion of a crossover passage formed in a first face of a first flange for receiving a plurality of ball bearings;

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a second stamped part having a second portion of the groove and a second portion of the crossover passage formed in a second face of a second flange, the second part operably positionable in face-to-face, flange-to-flange communication with the first part for returning the plurality of ball bearings from one end of the groove to an opposite end; and

means for connecting the first and second parts in face-to-face, flange-to-flange relationship with respect to one another to define a ball nut with a continuous recirculating path for a plurality of ball bearings.
